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The Federal Artillery and the Repulse
of Pickett's Charge,
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The Attack and Defense of Cemetery Ridge, July 2, 1863*

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David L. Shultz : "Double Canister at Ten Yards": The Federal Artillery and the Repulse of Pickett's Charge, July 3, 1863 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised "Double Canister at Ten Yards": The Federal Artillery and the Repulse of Pickett's Charge, July 3, 1863:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. How The Federal Artillery Repulsed Pickett's Charge By Robin Friedman So much has been written about Pickett's Charge on the third day of the Battle of Gettysburg that it is difficult to say something fresh. David Shultz accomplishes this feat in his new book, "Double Canister at Ten Yards: The Federal Artillery and the Repulse of Pickett's Charge, July 3, 1863." The author of many articles and books about Gettysburg, Shultz specializes in the study of artillery. Less can be more. Shultz's book is short and focuses entirely on the Union long arm in the hours before and during Pickett's Charge. Contrary to the blurbs for the book, artillery at Gettysburg and on day 3 of the battle has been studied extensively. Something is gained, however, by the focus of this book. The hero of Shultz's book is Brigadier General Henry Hunt, the Chief of Artillery for the Army of the Potomac. The most original parts of Shultz's study are the initial two chapters. They show Hunt painstakingly and thoughtfully placing the Union artillery at key points along the Union line beginning late on July 2 and continuing into the hours before the Confederate cannonade and infantry advance. This material lacks drama, but it shows the thought and hard work necessary to the Union defense. The focus on this activity in itself makes the book worth knowing. Hunt's efforts and the efforts of his subordinates allowed the Union artillery to cover the field and probably to defeat the Confederate advance before it began. An excellent map late in the book showing the fields of fire of the Union artillery (p. 82), together with the fortitude of the soldiers in standing fast and heroically performing their tasks virtually says it all. The remainder of the study shows the results of Hunt's planning in action during the Confederate cannonade of the Union position and the famous advance of the Confederate infantry. The material will be familiar to students of the battle, but much is gained by the specific and limited focus on the Union long arm. Unlike the pace of the early chapters, the portions of the book dealing with the cannonade and Pickett's charge read dramatically and quickly. With the focus on Hunt's planning and the artilleryists' devotion to their duty, the heroics on both sides of the line eloquently come through in the book. The book's title derives from an incident late in Pickett's charge. As Shultz describes it: "South of the Cope of Trees, Captain Cowan saw 'a Confederate officer not more than 20 feet away. I heard him yell, 'take that gun', referring to one of my guns. I ordered 'fire', and all five blew the line to pieces with double canister. The officer was gone. Cowan's quote would be memorialized after the battle as 'Double Canister at Ten Yards.'" Beyond noting the bravery and basic competence of the Southern artillery, Shultz does not go into detail on the efforts of Lee's use of his long arm on July 3. Readers familiar with the battle will be able to bring their own knowledge to bear. While Lee's army possessed a gifted artillery commander, Porter Alexander, he lacked the authority that Hunt possessed for the Union. The South's artillery commander, "Parson" Pendleton, made serious errors in the placement and lack of focus of his guns, in the use of the reserves, and in the expenditure of ammunition, leading to a lack of support for the infantry. Although not discussed by Shultz, the superiority of the Union's artillery command and efforts are implicit in his account. As the above comments suggest, this book will be of most value to readers with a good working knowledge of Pickett's charge. I learned a great deal from the narrow focus of the work. A unique and valuable aspect of the work is the Order of Battle for the Union artillery which shows the batteries engaged in the repulse of Pickett's Charge. The diagrams and maps in the book are well done and, together with many photographs of people and places on the battlefield, enhance the study. The book includes careful endnotes, but a bibliography would have been useful. Better proofing for typos and grammatical errors would have been valuable. The publisher, Savas Beatie, kindly sent me a review copy of this book. Robin Friedman 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Ok for the already knowledgeable, not so much for the rest of us. By Johnny Beans This book seems to be written for the person who is already very knowledgeable about the civil war in general and Gettysburg in particular. I have been there on lengthy battlefield tours several times and have read several books on the subject, and could still not follow what he was talking about most of the time. He assumes, for example, that you are already familiar with the geography of the place in detail. He also assumes you are already familiar with the different types of ordnance in use including its particular uses. I wasn't and, as a result, a lot of the detail left me behind. It was still moderately interesting, but for most people a more general description within the context of an overall description of the battle would be more informative. 6 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Excellent By James W. Durney Pickett's Charge is possibly the most famous incident in the war's most famous battle. A number of excellent books exist on Pickett's Charge covering almost every aspect from start to finish. This small book is an overview of the Federal artillery's preparation and response. It is something of a neglected subject, if such an item exists for Gettysburg. The norm is coverage of the artillery at the "High Water Mark" and the Confederate bombardment. This book covers the preparations on the night of July 2/3 in building and supply the gun line. While focusing on Pickett's Charge, the day's earlier actions are not ignored, even as they detracted from the main mission. The Confederate bombardment required a measured and timed response while unpopular and difficult. The author handles this with tact, acknowledging both sides have reasonable arguments. The section dealing with the attack is very well written, realistic and bloody, the Federal guns were a major reason this attack failed. This is a well written very readable overview with excellent maps and abundant illustrations. While a serious history, the battle sections read like a novel as the author fully captures the reality of a fighting battery at Gettysburg.

Most accounts of Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg focus on General Robert E. Lee's reasons for making the attack, its

preparation, organization, and ultimate failure. In the gripping study “Double Canister at Ten Yards”: The Federal Artillery and the Repulse of Pickett’s Charge, July 3, 1863, artillery expert David Shultz focuses his examination on the Union long-arm, and explains how and why General Henry Hunt and his gunners were able to beat back the Confederate foot soldiers. Shultz, who has studied Gettysburg for decades and walked every yard of its hallowed ground, uses official reports, letters, diaries, and other accounts to meticulously explain how Hunt and his officers and men worked tirelessly on the night of July 2 and well into July 3 to organize a lethal package of orchestrated destruction to greet the expected assault. The war witnessed many large scale assaults and artillery bombardments, but no example of defensive gunnery was more destructive than the ring of direct frontal and full-flank enfilading fire Hunt’s batteries unleashed upon Lee’s men.

“The author of several books on Gettysburg, Schultz here takes a very detailed look at the role of the Union artillery in the defeat of Robert E. Lee’s grand assault on July 3rd... An excellent look at the Union artillery in action, this will prove a useful read for anyone with an interest in Gettysburg.” (NYMAS)About the AuthorDavid L. Shultz is the author of many articles concerning the Battle of Gettysburg, and several books including Guide to Pennsylvania Troops at Gettysburg, The Battle Between the Farm Lanes: Hancock Saves the Union Center, and the co-author (with Scott Mingus Sr.) of The Second Day at Gettysburg: The Attack and Defense of Cemetery Ridge, July 2, 1863 (Savas Beatie, 2016). He is currently working on an extensive and comprehensive tactical study on the artillery at Gettysburg.